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Page: 1

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Case Number: S200000044

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 07866 01 OF 02 212237Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 IO-14 HA-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
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AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny
Exemption(s): _____
Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full
☐ Classify as _____ ☐ Extend as _____ ☐ Downgrade to _____
Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

[REDACTED] SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 7866

E.O. 12065 GDS 9-21-85 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P
TAGS SHUM, AR
SUBJECT (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - SEPTEMBER 12-19
REF: BUENOS AIRES 7636

SUMMARY: A REPORTED SUPREME COURT DECISION ORDERED
THE JUNTA TO RELEASE JACOBO TIMERMAN AND THE CONCLUSION
OF THE IAHRG VISIT (SEPTTEL) TOPPED THE CALENDAR DURING
THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW. THE REPORTED CANCER OF FORMER
PRESIDENT HECTOR CAMPORA, ALSO OPENS UP THE POSSIBILITY
THAT HE ULTIMATELY MAY BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.
THE CONTINUATION OF DISAPPEARANCES, INCLUDING THE
SNATCHING OF THREE MINOR CHILDREN ALONG WITH THEIR
PARENTS, GIVE FURTHER INDICATION THAT THE SECURITY
FORCES REMAIN WEDDED TO THEIR STANDARD ANTI-TERRORIST
TECHNIQUES WHEN THEY DEEM NECESSARY, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT

PAGE 02 BUENOS 07866 01 OF 02 212237Z

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 1

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1979BUENOS07866

Page: 2
Channel: n/a

Case Number: S200000044

THEY CAN DEMONSTRATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH METHODS AS REFLECTED IN THE CLAIMED DEATH OF TWO IMPORTANT MONONERO LEADERS IN A REPORTED SHOOT-OUT WITH THE POLICE, AFTER EVIDENTLY HAVING REENTERED THE COUNTRY CLANDESTINELY. THE HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS, WHILE VERY PLEASED WITH THE IAHRC VISIT, REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT THE ONGOING INVESTIGATION INTO THEIR ACTIVITIES BY THE JUDGE WHO ORDERED LAST MONTH'S JRAID ON THEIR HEADQUARTERS. END SUMMARY.

1. [REDACTED] TIMERMAN AND CAMPORA-ON WAY TO FREEDOM?-----
THERE WERE SEVERAL INDICATIONS THAT TWO OF ARGENTINA'S MOST NOTED POLITICAL DETAINEES MAY BE MOVING CLOSER TO LEAVING THE COUNTRY. IN A REMARKABLE WELL PUBLICIZED, BUT STILL SECRET DECISION, THE ARGENTINE SUPREME COURT HAS REPORTEDLY ORDERED THE JUNTA TO RELEASE JACOBO TIMERMAN. IT WAS ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT FORMER PRESIDENT HECTOR CAMPORA, WHO IS AN ASYLEE IN THE MEXICAN EMBASSY, IS SUFFERING FROM CANCER. HIS SICKNESS MAY LEAD GOA TO ALLOW HIM TO DEPART FOR TREATMENT ABROAD. HOWEVER, THESE DEVELOPMENTS ARE NO MORE THAN BEGINNINGS WHICH COULD BE ABORTED BY THOSE MILITARY-MEN WHO SEE TIMERMAN AND CAMPORA AS ARCHEVIL TYPES RESPONSIBLE FOR A GENERATION OF RADICALIZED YOUTH.

2. [REDACTED] TWO MONTONEROS REPORTED KILLED -----
THE GOVERNMENT HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT ARMANDO DANIEL CROATTO AND HORACIO MENDIZABAL, TWO HIGH RANKING MONTONEROS, WERE KILLED IN A SHOOT-OUT WITH SECURITY FORCES IN THE BUENOS AIRES SUBURB OF MUNRO SEPTEMBER 17. MENDIZABAL WAS THE MILITARY SECRETARY OF THE MONTONEROS AND CROATTO, A FORMER PERONIST DEPUTY WITH CONNECTIONS TO THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, WAS HEAD

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 07866 01 OF 02 212237Z

OF THE MONTONEROS LABOR BRANCH. CROATTO WAS REPORTED "MISSING" BY HIS ACQUAINTANCES SEPTEMBER 17 WHEN THEY WENT TO THE IAHRC TO SEEK HELP-AN EVENT THAT THE PRESS REPORTED SEPTEMBER 18. HOWEVER, SEVERAL OF OUR SOURCES EXPRESSED GREAT SURPRISE THAT HE WAS IN THE COUNTRY, GIVEN THE RECORD AND ASSOCIATIONS. IF REPORTS OF THEIR DEATH ARE ACCURATE, IT SEEMS THAT BOTH HE AND MENDIZABAL WERE LIVING HERE CLANDESTINELY. THE DEATH OF THESE TWO

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 2

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1979BUENOS07866

Page: 3
Channel: n/a

Case Number: S200000044

MEN IN ARGENTINA, SIGNIFICANT REVERSALS FOR THE MONTONEROS, SEEMS TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO RUMORS AND REPORTS WE HAVE HAD THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED THAT MONTONEROS ARE RETURNING TO THE COUNTRY. WHILE WE DO NOT THINK THE THREAT FROM THE TERRORIST IS VERY HIGH, SECURITY FORCES WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY USE THE PRESENCE OF THESE TWO MEN IN ARGENTINA TO JUSTIFY CONTINUING THEIR TECHNIQUES.

3. [REDACTED] CONTINUED DISAPPEARANCES -----
DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW WE BECAME AWARE OF SIX MORE SOLID REPORTS OF DISAPPEARANCES INCLUDING THE TAKING OF THREE MINOR CHILDREN ALONG WITH THEIR PARENTS. THE FAMILY INVOLVED, REGINO ADOLFO GONZALES, HIS WIFE, AND THEIR THREE SMALL DAUGHTERS WERE SEIZED SEPTEMBER 13. ACCORDING TO WHAT THE FAMILY OF THE GONZALES HAS TOLD US THAT THE COUPLE LEFT ARGENTINA IN 1976, SOON AFTER THE MILITARY COUP, AND RETURNED TO LIVE IN MUNRO ONLY A FEW MONTHS AGO. BY THE FAMILY'S STATEMENTS THEY WERE INVOLVED IN UNIVERSITY POLITICS PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE. (WE HAVE NO RECORD FOR A REGINO ADOLFO GONZALES BUT AN ADOLFO GONZALES WAS REPORTED TO A MONTONERO LEADER LIVING IN DAC ES SALAAM IN 1978.) ONE SECURITY FORCE HAS TOLD US, TOO THAT THE GONZALES' WERE MONTONEROS WITH A LONG RECORD. THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE RELEASED SEPTEMBER 21, ALLEGED THAT MRS GONZALES IS A MONTONERO. IT ALSO SAID THAT THE CHILDREN WERE TAKEN UNDER
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PAGE 04 BUENOS 07866 01 OF 02 212237Z

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY AND HAVE NOW BEEN RELEASED. THE PARENTS OF DANIEL CROSTA, A NINETEEN YEAR OLD WORKER, HAVE ALSO REPORTED HIS SEPTEMBER 15 DISAPPEARANCE TO US.

4. [REDACTED] OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION INTO TORTURE-----
ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THE ARMY IS CARRYING OUT AN UNUSUAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE AUGUST 22 ABDUCTION AND TORTURE OF SERGIO HUGO SILMAN IN ROSARIO. SILMAN WAS HELD SIX DAYS BEFORE BEING TURNED OVER TO A HOSPITAL, SUFFERING GRAVELY FROM THE MISTREATMENT HE RECEIVED. HE WAS REPORTEDLY ARRESTED BY MEN IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS ARMY SECURITY AFTER PASSING OUT A HANDOUT HELD SIX DAYS BEFORE BEING TURNED OVER TO A HOSPITAL,

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 3

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1979BUENOS07866

Page: 4
Channel: n/a

Case Number: S200000044

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 07866 02 OF 02 220031Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ADS-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PM-06 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 /068 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
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AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
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[REDACTED] SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 7866

DEALING WITH NICARAGUA. THE IAHRG LOOKED INTO THIS
CASE WHILE IN ROSARIO.

5. [REDACTED] LEGAL PROSECUTION OF PERONISTS FOR DECLARATION -----
TWO FEDERAL JUDGES, ONE IN PARANA AND THE OTHER IN RIO
GALLEGOS, HAVE OPENED AN INQUIRY INTO LAST WEEK'S
PERONIST DECLARATION CONCERNING THE GOVERNMENT AND THE
MILITARY FOR ITS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ARBITRARY
ACTIONS. PERONIST LEADERS DEOLINDO FELIPE BITTEL AND
HERMINIO IGLESIAS, WHO SIGNED THE DECLARATION ARE THE
OBJECTS OF AN INQUIRY BASED ON THEIR PRESUMABLY HAVING
VIOLATED THE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW. THE MILITARY HAS
BEEN OUTRAGED BY THE BITTEL STATEMENT AND ARMY COMMANDER
VIOLA REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO CRITICISM
FROM OTHER FLAG OFFICERS FOR ALLEGEDLY TREATING THE
PERONISTS TOO COMPLACENTLY. THE ARMY REACTED BY BLAM-
ING THE STATEMENT ON "COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS" IN THE
PERONIST MOVEMENT. THAT THE COURTS HAVE NOW GOTTEN INTO THE
ACT MAY SERVE TO CALM DOWN THE MILITARY.

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 4

Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1979BUENOS07866

Page: 5
Channel: n/a

Case Number: S200000044

[REDACTED]
PAGE 02 BUENOS 07866 02 OF 02 220031Z

6. [REDACTED] REPERCUSSIONS OF RAIDS ON HR ORGANIZATIONS -----
ONCE AGAIN INSPIRED LEAKS CONCERNING THE INVESTIGATION
INTO ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS THAT BEGAN WITH THE
RAIDS ON THE ORGANIZATIONS LAST MONTH APPEARED IN THE
BUENOS AIRES PRESS. THESE LEAKS SUGGEST THAT INVESTI-
GATING JUDGE JORGE ANZOATAGUI HAS DETERMINED THAT 400
ON THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY'S LIST OF DISAPPEARED (WHICH
NOW HAS MORE THAN 6,000 NAMES) ARE ACTUALLY LIVING
ABROAD WHILE ANOTHER 50 ARE BEING LEGALLY PROSECUTED.
THE JUDGE IS REPORTEDLY SEEKING TO DETERMINE WHERE THE
ORGANIZATIONS GET THEIR FUNDS TO SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS
ACTIVISTS' "INEXPLICABLE ABILITY" TO TRAVEL IN ARGENTINA
AND ABROAD. THE REPORTS ALSO SUGGEST THAT THE JUDGE IS
INVESTIGATING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS
ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY, HAVE
ENGAGED NOT ONLY IN A "PROCEDURAL FRAUD" BUT ALSO IN AN
ORGANIZED CAMPAIGN TO DEFAME ARGENTINA, SOME REPORTS NOTE
THAT FOLLOWING THE RAIDS THE JUDGE RECEIVED NUMEROUS
LETTERS FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CHAPTERS ABROAD
ASKING HIM TO STOP HIS "PERSECUTION". THE JUDGE IS
ALSO REPORTEDLY EXAMINING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE
HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS CONSTITUTE "ILLICIT
ASSOCIATIONS." SOURCES IN THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY ARE
WORRIED BY THE IMPLICATION THAT IT MAY AT SOME TIME
HAVE TO FACE THE CHARGE THAT IT IS AN ILLEGAL ASSOCIATION.
THE EXACT IMPACT OF SUCH A CHARGE IS UNCLEAR AT THIS
POINT, BUT THIS IS NOT A BATTLE THAT THE ASSEMBLY WANTS
TO FIGHT, PARTICULARLY SINCE IT WOULD HAVE A CHILLING
EFFECT ON THOSE WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE APPROACH THE
ASSEMBLY FOR HELP.

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Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 5